

KS5 Psychology – Recommended Reading

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Fiction** |  |
| Book Title | Author | Description |
| **Social Psychology** |
| 1984 | George Orwell | *1984* (published in 1949) is Orwell’s vision of a futuristic society in which individuals are subjected to a dehumanising regime led by ‘Big Brother’. The novel explores issues of conformity and freedom useful to the course. |
| Schlinder’s List | Thomas Keneally | A factual account of Oscar Schindler, a Nazi German industrialist, who saved the lives of several hundred Jews during the second world war. This book will offer interesting background to the social psychology studies of obedience and prejudice. |
| **Psychodynamic Psychology** |
| Heart of Darkness | Joseph Conrad | Often regarded as a must read for English Literature students, A Heart of Darkness is narrated by Marlow, an ivory trader, at the end of the 1800s, who is employed to transport ivory to a remote African company. As he travels downriver, he is forced to wait for ship repairs and learns more of the enigmatic Kurtz, a much feared ivory trader, who has colonised the regional tribes and created a regime of terror and tyranny in a quest for dominance of the ivory trade. Despite his genius and charisma, Kurtz also is described in hollow terms: a man who represents amorality.  |
| **Social & Psychodynamic Psychology** |
| We Need to Talk About Kevin | Lionel Shriver | This is told from the point of view of an American mother whose son descended into petty crime and violence before committing a mass high school shooting. Some interesting issues about whether behaviour is learned or inbuilt. |
|  **Behavioural & Learning Psychology** |
| A Clockwork Orange | Anthony Burgess | This novel has received as much attention for its film version (which director Stanley Kubrick banned following several copycat incidents after its cinema release) as for the original novel. After his imprisonment, the main protagonist Alex, is given ‘The Ludovico Technique’, an extreme and inhumane form of ‘classical conditioning’ (which is part of the course), in which he is shown ultra-violent images to stop his own sadistic urges. The film is an 18 and not for the faint-hearted, although discussion of the film’s reception is also relevant to the issue of social learning theory and the debate about whether individuals imitate media violence. |
| **Mental Health & Psychodynamic Psychology** |
| One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest | Ken Kesey | Randle McMurphy, a convicted criminal, fakes his own insanity in order to escape mainstream prison for a hospital for the mentally ill. The novel becomes a conflict between McMurphy and the tyrannical Nurse Ratchet whose sense of medical care involves repressing the male patients and keeping them in line. This is a very good book to consider the notion of insanity and the power of authority to impose such a label |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Non-Fiction** |  |
| Book Title | Author | Description |
| Psychology Review | Hodder Education | Psychology Review provides articles by experts in the field written specifically for A-level students, up-to-date discussion of research, and support for examination and maths skills. |
| **Cognitive Psychology** |
| Fundamentals of Cognition | Michael Eysenek | Michael Eysenck explores the key processes that allow us to make sense of the world around us |
| **Cognitive & Social Psychology** |
| Genie | Russ Rymer | Rymer tells the story of a child found, aged 13, living the life of a prisoner. Rymer outlines attempts by experts to teach Genie to speak, raising interesting questions about language acquisition. |
| **Ethics** |
| Causing Death and Saving Lives | Jonathan Glover | Glover examines the questions: when, if ever, is it right to take life? |
|  **Biological Psychology** |
| The Student’s Guide to Neuroscience | J Ward | A useful guide into brain research. |
| **Social Psychology** |
| The Lucifer Effect | Philip Zimbardo | Zimbardo’s book outlines his famous prison experiment and applies his ideas to contemporary events such as the Abu Ghraib scandal. |
| Obedience to Authority | Stanley Milgram | Milgram describes his original 1963 study and the variation studies since. |
| **Mental Health** |
| Shoot the Damn Dog | Sally Brampton | A personal story of the late Sally Brampton’s struggle with depression |
| **Positive Psychology** |
| Mindset | Benjamin Smith | ‘How positive thinking will set you free and help you achieve massive success in life’A ‘self-help’ book on how to be more positive |
| **Social & Behaviourist Psychology** |
| Man Disconnected: How the Digital Age is Changing Young Men Forever | Philip Zimbardo | Looks at modern young men and tries to explain why they are falling behind their female counterparts |